Who is to blame for the present entanglement? President Reagan is half right; it is the Democrats. But his own party has contributed a healthy portion to the mishandling. Nixon and Kennedy stand as the major policy innovators of the last two decades. Kennedy launched trade liberalization, but his efforts to insulate the U.S. from an international economy based on a fixed American dollar rate of exchange was, in Calleo's words, "naive." Nixon's abandonment of the Bretton Woods agreement lifted the burden from the U.S. of converting its dollars to gold. Exchange rates were free to float. But while this improved U.S. exports through depreciation of the dollar, it did not curb multinational investment abroad, nor did Calleo assert, did it cure "the American malaise... The economy had grown even more addicted to inflation." Nixon's "New Economic Plan" was a mere palliative handed down to subsequent presidents. The rotten core—inflation, for example—was left unscathed.

Whatever the policy, whoever the architect, a new relationship among Atlantic allies is here to stay. The Kennedy and now Reagan-resuscitated vision of Pax Americana is outdated and unrealistic at best: it is potentially dangerous and confrontational at worst. Perhaps we are witnessing a revival of the Nixon-Kissinger approach, where "geopolitics comes to the rescue of economics." That the country has failed to face up to its underlying mismanagement its fragmented energy and jobs policies, its inflated military economy—Calleo makes clear. But his prescriptions for institutional renovation, however bold they may be, are themselves the victim of too broad generalization. History is surely helpful in showing how we reached this juncture, but it does not dictate the next step. If Calleo has sketched the broad lines, the details need filling in.

FEIFFER: JULES FEIFFER'S AMERICA FROM EISENHOWER TO REAGAN
edited by Steve Heller
(Alfred A. Knopf: 254 pp.; $25.00, $12.95)

Kalman Goldstein

For over twenty-five years now we have enjoyed being depressed by Jules Feiffer cartoons. That ever-musochistic narcissist, Bernard Margeneckler, the Dancer, Osaka and Feiffer's alter ego; the monumental Talking Heads who spout political and social obscenity with almost complete lack of affect—all these have become part of a generation's cultural imagery. Now Feiffer and Heller have chosen the most representative times and the most representative pieces and grouped them by presidential administration, with some introductory hindsight for each section. Most are still as fresh, as shocking, as timely as when first penned. They are angry, satirical, sarcastic, sometimes quite profound—and they usually ring true.

The book reveals how intellect, subject, and style of presentation produce images. As Feiffer has aged, his characters have become more substantial, more heavily drawn, fuller in contour. Bernard is no longer, a wispy figure; and even when he is shown tap-dancing his way through life, his slender outline is encased in a heavily inked Fred Astaire tuxedo. Huey became bald, paunchy, and suburbanized, much to Bernard's satisfaction, but that has obviated any vicious identification with the young stud. Early Feiffer cartoons have a resemblance to those of Shel Silverstein (short, thin lines, wispy and only tentatively filled in); much of his '60s work has the thicker, bolder line of an Osborn (if not the spiraling expressionist horror); his most recent work is so heavily scored, shaded or blacked in that it would express a mood effectively even without a line of dialogue. Compare his drawings of Nixon during 1960 with those of "Vietnixon," as he called him, and the style tells much about what had happened to America and how Feiffer felt about it. If, as he admits, his presentation of Ford as "Happy Hooligan" does not quite work, his Carter—a puffy, toothsome, bland visage—complements the words the cartoonist places in his mouth.

In his introduction Feiffer worries whether over the years he has lost his radicalism. He has. One can follow the Dancer from early aspirations, through anger and exasperation during the 1960s (she dances with a gun or in Weather Underground riot regalia), to her most recent self-righteous cynicism. Bernard has given up on politics and frenzied sexuality and just muses on the meaninglessness of it all. Portrayals of Ford and Kissinger were flatter and more sarcastic than sharply satiric. Feiffer's reaction to Reagan is bleakly pessimistic, even
passive. Yet he has lost his bitter disappointment that the ideals of the '50s and '60s never were seriously pursued, much less achieved. His comments on politics always have been broad and uncomplicated; no one who has read recent history or who has watched our leaders gyrate on television can fail to recognize why Feiffer shows them as blatant hypocrites, opportunists, or self-deluding mediocrities. One must recognize that Feiffer does not have the material he once had to work with. What can compare with our delicious outrage at Johnson or Nixon? What can compare with the wonderful irony, portrayed by Feiffer, in the ambivalent relationships between fearful and ingratiating white liberals and angry but shrewdly manipulative black activists?

To some extent Feiffer is the victim of a generation gap. One cartoon refers to the difference between earlier "loneliness freaks" and more recent "group freaks." Feiffer was not completely comfortable with the '60s extremists, though he could label them sharply and with appreciative humor; but I find his comments on youth in the '70s off the mark. His portrayal of sexual politics is forced, even though on the "correct" side of issues; and Bernard's continuing misanthropy with "castrating females." The series on the "Wall" cartoon, some of Bernard's encounters with gut-grabbing as they once were, there are so many gems among the older cartoons that one cannot help being caught up, even during a casual browse: the cat-and-mouse allegory of liberal-leftism and radicalism, the Nixon "stone-well" cartoon, some of Bernard's encounters with "castrating females," the series on the "Radical Middle," the Dancer's touching resiliency, the bigoted Talking Heads. Anyone who lived among coffeehouse posers, who shared a nauseated fascination with makeout artists like Huey "the rat with women," who felt paralyzed by Eisenhower-era complacency, or who cared about which direction we were going in the '60s must read this book.

Reprising Feiffer's work is an adventure in bleak nostalgia, but well worth it for the revelations it provides about the cartoonist, his milieu, and his society. Above all, it is bitingly funny.

LENI SM AND WESTERN SOCIALISM
by Roy Medvedev
(New Left Books [London], distributed by Schocken Books; 256 pp.; $19.50/$8.50)

Myrna Chase

There is a certain fascination in reading Medvedev's work over the decade since he wrote Let History Be the Judge! and was expelled from the Communist party. He is not the heroic dissident facing prison, exile, or the asylum for his protest at home or abroad. His works, published only in the West, operate within an acceptable range of historical criticism; and on particular subjects, such as nuclear disarmament, he is an articulate and intelligent spokesman for his government's position to liberals and leftists. His works attract us, in part, because we wish to see how far he will go. Will his revelations end in a rethinking of his political commitments or will his readers reassess their own sympathies?

This latest volume, a response to Euro-communism, manifests a genuine concern with the loss of momentum and vitality in the world Communist movement despite the growing number of Communists in the world. Medvedev sees this as a crisis stemming from the loss of solidity and unity and requiring the reexamination of some fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. Although there is no mention of Gramsci, the French Marxists, the Eastern European critics, the English socialists, or indeed of any of the ideologists who have worked to revitalize Marxism in the last generation, Medvedev knows they exist. It is, of course, significant that most of the intellectual vitality of Marxism is found outside the Communist movement. Medvedev sees this as a crisis stemming from the loss of solidarity and unity and requiring the reexamination of some fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. Although there is no mention of Gramsci, the French Marxists, the Eastern European critics, the English socialists, or indeed of any of the ideologists who have worked to revitalize Marxism in the last generation, Medvedev knows they exist. It is, of course, significant that most of the intellectual vitality of Marxism is found outside the Communist movement.

If, finally, this work has only a Western audience in mind, then it seems more a work of rationalization and explanation than of revelation. In the past Medvedev had little to say to true social democrats precisely because he was so unwilling to entertain the thought that Lenin and Leninism may well have been father to Stalin and Stalinism...